5.3 South Dade Agricultural Interests

The University of Florida Miami-Dade County Extension (Extension) is both a division of the Miami-Dade County Consumer Services Department and a unit of the University of Florida Extension. It is also affiliated with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Extension is the county's "agriculture agency." The Extension, in conjunction with the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), is responsible for disaster assessments to determine the extent of agricultural losses immediately following natural disasters, such as floods, hurricanes, freezes, droughts, and "man-made" accidents such as nuclear disasters.


Photo courtesy of U of F

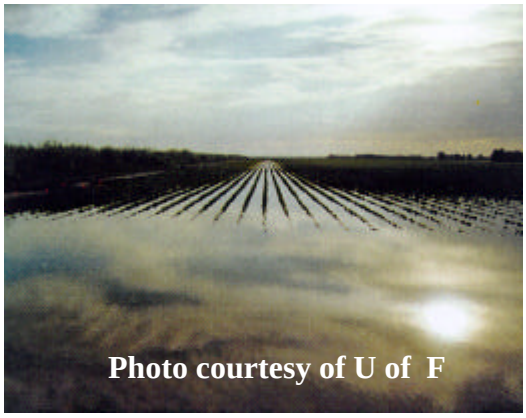
Photo courtesy of U of F

After Hurricane Irene's flood waters had subsided somewhat, FSA and Extension conducted a survey of the agricultural areas on Saturday, October 16 and Sunday, October 17, 1999. The survey covered the area bounded by North Kendall Drive on the north, the main entrance to Everglades National Park (SR9336) on the south, L-31W on the west and the East Glade near Biscayne National Park on the east.


Photo courtesy of U of F

Of the 45,285 acres in agricultural production on October 15, 1999, some 26,626 were either lost

to flooding or to secondary disease problems resulting from standing in water for a period of time. These losses were due to the >15 inches of rainfall attributed to Hurricane "Irene." These losses amounted to $229,983,757 for Miami-Dade County alone.

Many agriculture fields sustained over two feet of water for more than two days following the storm. Flooding damage to crops that are not flood tolerant is not necessarily just from surface flooding. Certain crops, such as some types of fruit trees can not tolerate flooding of the root zone. No vegetable crops, other than aquatic vegetables, which require flooded conditions for growth, are tolerant of flooding.

A number of primary canals were observed to be overflowing their banks on both October 16 and 17. These included canals L-31W, C-102, C-103, C-111, and C-111E. Several canals were observed overflowing their banks onto adjoining agricultural fields, which exacerbated the crop loss situation.

The report submitted to the Task Force may be found in Appendix M.

Please see the maps at the beginning of this Section for locations of agricultural areas in south Miami-Dade County.

5.4 City of Miami Springs

Comments below were excerpted from January 18, 2000 meeting of the Flood Management Task Force:

The City has spent over two million dollars to repair sewer lines. It cost the residents $157,000 to treat groundwater that went through the sewer lines as a result of this flooding. The City stated that groundwater levels should be lowered, because they were a big factor in flooding and surcharging their sewer systems.

Further information submitted by the City of Miami Springs may be found in Appendix T.

Please refer to the maps at the beginning of Chapter 5 for the locations of each trouble area within the north, central and south parts of Miami-Dade County.